

I am a United Church of Christ pastor in suburban Portland, Oregon. I very much appreciate the members of the Task Force on Universal Health Care volunteering to do this essential and historical work to bring health equity to all residing in Oregon. The purposes to which all of you have committed could not have been better during this time of crisis:

- (1) Improving the health status of individuals, families, and communities;
- (2) Defending against threats to the health of the residents of this state;
- (3) Protecting individuals from the financial consequences of ill health;
- (4) Providing equitable access to person-centered care;
- (5) Removing cost as a barrier to accessing health care;
- (6) Removing any financial incentive for a health care practitioner to provide care to one patient rather than another;
- (7) Making it possible for individuals to participate in decisions affecting their health and the health system;
- (8) Establishing measurable health care goals and guidelines that align with other state and federal health standards; and
- (9) Promoting continuous quality improvement and fostering inter-organizational collaboration.

As a minister I work with many people in the midst of acute crises and also walk with them through long, chronic illnesses and the end of life. How tragic it is that in their greatest times of stress and need they also need to be worrying about medical bills and financial health. Beyond that, I see repeatedly how the entire health system suffers due to the high overhead of our present system. We could be, we should be able to give and receive better health care with less anxiety than this. All of us.

Again, I thank each and every one of you for your commitment.

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